

23 April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on Broomhill Primary School and Nursery Class. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Aberdeen City Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found. The Care Inspectorate inspected the nursery class at the same time and that report will be available at www.careinspectorate.com.

Develop further approaches to learning, teaching and assessment across the nursery and school to ensure greater consistency. In doing so, it will be important for all staff to have a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching.

Senior leaders and staff have made good progress in taking this area for improvement forward in the primary classes. The headteacher has supported staff well to improve the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Staff now have a better understanding of the key features of high quality learning and teaching. Senior leaders have introduced rigorous quality assurance approaches dedicated to improving learning and teaching. These measures are having a positive impact and learning and teaching has improved across the school. Staff are motivated and enthusiastic about leading further improvements to embed consistently high quality learning and teaching. Teachers at the early stages are developing effective approaches to support children to learn through play. Children respond well to the opportunities they have to lead their own learning in this context. They are able to identify confidently the skills they are learning as a result of these experiences.

Across the school, there is a purposeful and respectful learning environment. Almost all children behave and interact well with each other and staff. Overall, children benefit from well-planned and structured learning experiences. Teachers need to continue with efforts to maximise learning and teaching time. Staff provide carefully planned tasks and activities which meet the needs of most children. A few children would benefit from greater challenge in learning. Teachers are increasingly using questioning to extend children's learning and develop higher-order thinking skills. Children are developing their digital-literacy skills well as a result of a well-planned programme across the school. Pupil support assistants are supporting children with identified learning needs well. Children's views are captured through pupil voice groups which focus on improving school experiences.

Senior leaders are supporting practitioners in the nursery to improve their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. The staff team in the nursery are developing new ways to plan and assess children's learning. Practitioners are responding better to children's interests. They are improving the way they identify and take forward children's next steps in learning. Staff, supported by senior leaders, should develop further their approaches to planning to ensure they build on what children already know.

The majority of practitioners now support children's learning better, asking appropriate questions to extend and develop learning. There is a need to make this more consistent across the staff team. Practitioners continue to improve how they observe children's learning. They record their observations in different ways, for example, using a digital platform. Senior leaders should continue to support the team to develop further their skills in identifying and recording significant learning. Practitioners are beginning to build up a more detailed picture of the progress children are making across aspects of their learning. Staff now need to have a shared understanding in how best to use assessment information. This can support children to make the best possible progress. A few parents would welcome more regular updates about their children's progress and how they are settling into the nursery. The team should explore how they can do this more effectively. Parents would also like information about how they can support their children's learning at home.

Develop further approaches to tracking and monitoring children's learning across the nursery and school to ensure all children make the best possible progress.

Senior leaders have introduced an improved system to measure the progress children are making as they move through the school. They use this information well to identify potential gaps in learning and target support to groups of children who are at risk of not attaining appropriately. Increasingly, senior leaders and staff use tracking data to identify those children who require additional challenge in learning. Senior leaders have taken positive steps to improve the way staff assess children's learning. They have established an approach where staff now work in trios which is supporting them well to have a shared understanding of achievement levels. Teachers value these opportunities to learn with and from their colleagues. Senior leaders have identified the need to continue this positive start by increasing opportunities for staff to work together. It would also be beneficial for staff to collaborate with colleagues from other schools. A few parents would welcome more information about how their children's work is assessed and the progress they are making. Senior leaders have introduced successful approaches to capture and celebrate children's achievement in the primary classes.

Senior leaders and practitioners continue to develop new approaches to track children's progress in the nursery class. This is still at an early stage of development. The team are confident that the new digital platform they are now using will offer greater opportunities to track children's learning. Practitioners gather information about children's progress across aspects of their learning. This is not yet providing a clear overview of children's progress over time. Staff should continue to develop these approaches with support from senior leaders and local authority officers.

Improve children's experiences in the nursery class to ensure all children are supported to make the best possible progress.

Most children continue to be happy and content within the setting. They benefit from positive supportive relationships with the adults who care for them. Most children share resources and space well with other children. They enjoy playing alongside their friends. Children new to the nursery are settling well. Children enjoy extended periods of time to lead their own learning. A few children require more adult direction and support to enable them to access all areas in the nursery. The staff team should review the balance of the nursery day to allow children to have increased interactions with adults.

The staff team have taken positive steps to improve both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. Children now enjoy more attractive and interesting contexts to support their learning. The staff team now seek children's views to develop areas, for example, the role play area. The majority of children develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the learning environment. A few children require more challenge in learning to develop their skills further. Children are now able to access more appropriate places for rest and relaxation. Children are now enjoying and benefitting from a more appropriate relaxed lunchtime experience. Practitioners now engage more effectively with children during this time, providing children with a more sociable and meaningful experience.

Senior leaders have implemented a number of new approaches to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery. There are early signs that this is having a positive impact. The nursery staff team and senior leaders receive regular support from local authority officers to support improvement in the setting. It will be important that rigorous quality assurance is maintained and developed further to ensure that the setting continues to improve.

What happens next?

The primary school has made positive progress since the original inspection. We are confident that the primary school has the capacity to continue to improve so will make no more visits to the primary school in connection with this inspection. The nursery class is beginning to make progress since the original inspection. We will ask for a report on progress within one year of the inspection. This report will inform any decision made by Education Scotland regarding further engagement. This may include another inspection visit. When such a decision is made, we will write to you again detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action, agreed with Aberdeen City Council that we intend to take.

Jackie Maley
HM Inspector